

Assembly Bill No. 516

CHAPTER 100

An act to add Section 101.11 to the Streets and Highways Code, relating to redevelopment, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

[Approved by Governor July 1, 2002. Filed with
Secretary of State July 1, 2002.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 516, Cedillo. Redevelopment: Byzantine-Latino Quarter.

(1) Existing law requires the Department of Transportation to keep and repair all objects or markers adjacent to a state highway that have been erected to mark registered historical places.

This bill would require the Department of Transportation, through the erection of highway signs and appropriate markers to provide recognition of the historical importance of the Byzantine-Latino Quarter within the City of Los Angeles.

(2) The bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) The Byzantine-Latino Quarter is located at the southwestern border of the neighborhood currently known as the Pico-Union area. The boundaries for the Byzantine-Latino Quarter include the following: Olympic Boulevard on the north; Venice Boulevard on the south; 11th Street and Alvarado Boulevard on the east; and Normandie Avenue on the west.

(b) The Byzantine-Latino Quarter represents one of the more diverse and historic districts within the Los Angeles area, serving as a major contributor to the preservation of cultural understanding and community heritage.

(c) The Pico-Union area was initially established as a fledgling suburb of Los Angeles when downtown Los Angeles was the primary commercial center in the early days of the 20th century. Because of its physical proximity to downtown Los Angeles, the Pico-Union area has served as an attractive destination point for new immigrants. Early residents of the area included middle- and upper-income Norwegians, Swedes, Welsh, and Russian Jews. The changing demographics of the



various subcommunity populations have revitalized the growth and development of the Byzantine-Latino Quarter.

(d) The Byzantine-Latino Quarter illustrates a more historic residential and commercial Los Angeles district. Officially designated as the Byzantine-Latino Quarter by the City of Los Angeles, this renewed community creates unique cultural constructs by joining Hellenic ideals and Latin American traditions, further promoting a vibrant sense of community. Sincere community efforts are currently developing the Byzantine-Latino Quarter into a cultural, ethnic, and specialty business zone that highlights the great world cultures represented by the Greek Byzantine as well as Latino populations. This critical endeavor in community building redefines and reinforces that which continues to attract new residents to the area.

(e) The Byzantine-Latino Quarter has witnessed a significant rise in the population of foreign-born residents during the 20th century, attributing to the increasing representation of the Latino population. In general, networks of kin and compadres (those from the same towns and regions) have facilitated the steady influx of Central Americans to the Pico-Union area, promoting easier transitions for these new immigrants. Consequently, numerous community organizations and commercial establishments have responded to this shifting dynamic by tailoring crucial programs and services to the Spanish-speaking population. Census records also indicate the rising numbers of other ethnic minority populations like Asian Pacific Islanders and African-Americans, providing further testament to the diverse contributions of an evolving community.

(f) Being that the Byzantine-Latino Quarter successfully maintains the appeal of its historic cultural elements against its ever-changing demographic profile, this unique area perseveres in drawing new residents, both immigrant and nonimmigrant. The history of the Byzantine-Latino Quarter intimates a rich and enduring tapestry, woven with the threads of many remarkable lives, cultures, and events.

SEC. 2. Section 101.11 is added to the Streets and Highways Code, to read:

101.11. (a) The Department of Transportation shall, through the erection of highway signs and appropriate markers, provide recognition of the historical importance of the Byzantine-Latino Quarter in the City of Los Angeles. In order to implement this subdivision, the department shall determine the cost of signs and other appropriate markers, consistent with the signing requirements for the state highway system, showing this special designation, and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources sufficient to cover the cost, shall erect those signs and



other appropriate markers at the appropriate locations on Interstate Highway 10.

(b) Local designation efforts and other similar actions may complement this project.

SEC. 3. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

To permit signs and other appropriate markers designating the historic area of the Byzantine-Latino Quarter in the City of Los Angeles to be fabricated and erected at the earliest possible date, in order to best coincide with other redevelopment activities in the area, it is necessary that this act go into immediate effect.

